

# OFFICIAL REPORTS OF SOCIETIES

IN CHARGE OF

MARY E. THORNTON

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## CONGRESS OF NURSES

THE Committee on convening a Congress of Nurses met on Thursday and Friday, January 3 and 4, 1901, at the Post-Graduate Nurses' Club, New York City. There were present Miss Keating, Mrs. Robb, Miss Riddle, Miss Alline, Miss McDowell, Miss Dock, Miss Thornton, Miss Walker, and Miss Banfield. Miss Keating was made temporary chairman. The provisional secretary, Miss Dock, reported on the preliminary work of sending announcements and invitations. Letters asking for delegates have been sent to the following organizations:

In the United States, to the Spanish-American Order of War Nurses, the St. Barnabas Guild, and all individual alumnae, clubs, and associations; in Canada, to the alumnae and to the Victorian Order of Nurses; in Great Britain, to the Royal Navy Nursing Service, the Army Nursing Service, the India Nursing Service, the Poor-Law Nursing Service, the Metropolitan Asylum Board, the Queen's Institute for Nurses, both the central office and the branches in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales; the Colonial Nursing Association, the Northern Workhouse Association, the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, the League of St. Bartholomew's Nurses, the Royal British Nurses' Association, the Registered Nurses' Society, St. John's House, the Nurses' Co-operation, the Midwives' Institute, the Incorporated Society of Trained Masseuses, the Bradford Incorporated Nurses' Institution, the Dublin Nurses' Club, the Dublin Metropolitan Technical School for Nurses, and to the London, St. Bartholomew's, the Middlesex, St. George's, and St. Thomas's Hospitals in London, to the Birmingham General Hospital, the Leeds General Infirmary, the Royal Infirmarys of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Western Infirmary of Glasgow, the Richmond, Whitworth, and Hardwick Government Hospitals in Ireland, and St. Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin; in Sweden, to the Sophiahemmet Nurses of Stockholm; in Denmark, to the Commune Hospital of Copenhagen and to the Danish Council of Nurses; in Holland, to the Wilhelmina Hospital, the Dutch Matrons' Council, the Dutch Nursing Association, and the Dutch Association for Furthering the Interests of Male and Female Nurses; in

Germany, to the Victoria House in Berlin, and the Hamburg Nursing Association, the Evangelischen Diakonie-Verein, the Deaconess Establishment at Kaiserswerth, and to the Central Committee of the Red Cross; in Italy, to the Blue Cross Nurses' Association, Naples; in Australia, to the Australasian Nurses' Association and the Prince Alfred Hospital Trained Nurses' Re-union; in Africa, to St. Michael's Home, Kimberley. Letters of invitation have also been sent individually to the superintendents of nursing or matrons of the large hospitals, members of the International Council, Matrons' Council, and the Superintendents' Society. As yet none have been sent to Japan and the East or to South America. The committee will be glad to learn of names and addresses of hospitals or of organizations or individual nurses in the other countries still unlisted to whom invitations may be sent. They also ask for names and addresses of army nurses of the Civil War. The various nursing journals also have had letters; however, the press in general is still to be written to. After the reports came election of officers, and it was moved and voted that the active officers elected, with the present committee, should compose the Executive Committee of the Congress of Nurses. They are as follows:

President and chairman of Congress, Miss Isabel McIsaac, of the Illinois Training-School, Chicago.

First vice-presidents, Mrs. Robb and Miss Keating.

Second vice-presidents, Miss Damer and Miss Snively.

Secretary, Miss Banfield.

Treasurer, Miss Riddle.

It was decided that Miss Florence Nightingale should be asked to accept an honorary title, and that representative nurses of the different countries should be placed on the list of honorary officers. These will be announced by name and title as they send their replies. The time of Congress by request of the Buffalo Nurses' Association was fixed for the week beginning September 16, Monday, Tuesday, and Saturday being agreed upon for business meetings, and Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for the Congress programme. The Associated Alumnae will hold a short business meeting on Monday morning, the Superintendents' Society at noon, and the International Council of Nurses on the afternoon of Monday, the 16th, unless some change is announced. Committees were formed as follows: Finance, Reception, Programme, Publication (a standing committee), Local Arrangements (Buffalo Nurses' Club). Under "Finance," it was decided that a nominal entrance-fee to the Congress meetings should be charged to all except the foreign delegates, and that these should be entertained during the Congress; under "Reception," it was planned that each large city should organize a local

Reception Committee; under "Programme," the subjects to be treated were blocked out, leaving the details to the committee, as follows:

1. Hospital Administration :
    - A. Women as Heads of Hospitals.
    - B. How Hospitals are Administered in This and Other Countries.
    - C. The Executive and the Training-School Side of Hospitals.
  2. Education of Nurses :
    - A. Preparatory Training.
    - B. The Training-School.
    - C. Post-Graduate Courses.
    - D. Teachers' College Course.
  3. District Nursing.
  4. Army, Navy, and Red Cross Work.
  5. The Relation of the Modern Nurse to Modern Medicine.
  6. Private Nursing.
  7. Hourly Nursing.
  8. Nurses' Settlement Work.
  9. Ethics.
  10. Legal Registration.
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#### NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN

THE committee appointed to adjust the matter of making application for membership in the National Council of Women held its meeting during the first week in January. Its members, Miss Keating and Miss Merritt, of the Superintendents' Association; Miss Healy and Miss Thornton, of the Associated Alumnae, with Miss L. L. Dock as a member-at-large, decided that application be made at once and under the comprehensive title, "American Federation of Nurses." Having in mind the various bodies of nurses that would in time become affiliated, it was thought that this name would embrace all associations.

The secretary was instructed to make formal application to Mrs. Fannie Humphreys Gaffney, the president of the National Council of Women.

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THE Long Island College Hospital Training-School's Alumnae Association wishes to announce the marriage of its president, Miss Collins, to the Rev. Cornelius L. Twing, of Brooklyn. We feel we are to be congratulated, as Mr. Twing has always been deeply interested in the nursing world and now stands, with his wife, ready to help us in whatever field of work we enter; consequently our association has received

a new impulse, and we hope to progress rapidly in every way. Our last meeting, December 10, was very interesting and enthusiastic.

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A MEETING of the "Graduate Nurses' Association" of Cleveland was held at the Lakeside Hospital on December 18. After the general business of the association was disposed of, an interesting discussion took place on the possibility of the organization offering practical assistance to the poor of the city, this assistance to be in the form of district or hourly nursing. Committees were appointed to thoroughly investigate ways and means adopted in other cities and by other organizations, and to report at the next monthly meeting. It is hoped that at that time some practical plan may be suggested by which the organization can start one or both of these forms of charitable nursing in a small way. The association received an invitation from the secretary of the Congress of Nurses at the Pan-American Exposition to send a delegate, and expressed itself as desirous of accepting the invitation. The last hour of the meeting was devoted to the entertainment arranged by the social committee.

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ON the evening of December 3 the Alumnae of the Training-School of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania gave a birthday party at the Home, Thirty-third and Spruce Streets, for the benefit of the nurses' endowed room.

The parlor, dining-room, and hall were tastefully decorated with palms and flowers. Music, instrumental and vocal, was rendered by a number of the nurses, and the University Glee and Banjo Clubs added greatly to the evening's pleasure.

Refreshments were served at nine-thirty, after which the large dining-room was used for dancing. We can safely say it was socially and financially a success.

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THE regular quarterly meeting of the Monroe County Graduate Nurses' Association was held yesterday afternoon at the Isabella Hart Home of the City Hospital, Rochester. The president, Miss Palmer, presided, and there was a good attendance.

There were a number of important matters which came up for discussion, one of which was the desirability of a Consumers' League to be formed in this city. Considerable time was given to a discussion of the work of the Consumers' League and the good results which it has effected in New York City, particularly in its fight against the sweat-shop

methods. Nurses in particular are interested in this feature of the work, since the sweat-shops are prolific sources of contagion and disease.

The by-laws and constitution of the association were also discussed, as some revision is to be made in these, but no formal action was taken at yesterday's meeting. It was announced that a Congress of Nurses will be held in Buffalo in the last week of September next, during the Pan-American Exposition, and Miss Palmer suggested the desirability of the association taking an active part in this Congress, owing to the close proximity of Rochester to Buffalo. She thought the association should appoint a delegate to attend the Congress officially, and it might be necessary to offer some financial assistance to the undertaking. This suggestion was favorably received.

The code of ethics, which had been presented at a previous meeting and laid upon the table, was taken up and discussed. In this connection was read a paper written by Miss Lavinia L. Dock, secretary of the International Council of Nurses, on "Ethics in Nursing." This was both bright and trite. Recess was then taken, when refreshments were served, and an opportunity was given the members to discuss the proposed code informally.

When the meeting was again called to order, the code of ethics as presented was amended and adopted. The preamble sets forth that the members feel the necessity of some definite moral force or laws which shall bind them in harmonious relations.

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IN March, 1898, there was organized in Cleveland the College Club, being a society of women graduates of any recognized college or university, either of this or foreign countries. The object of the organization was mainly to draw women graduates together and to provide some social and literary opportunities for those who were away from their own Alma Mater. That such an organization is appreciated is recognized by the fact that there are now over one hundred members.

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THE regular quarterly meeting of the Rochester City Hospital Alumnae Association was held in the assembly-room of the Isabella Graham Hart Home for Nurses of the Rochester City Hospital on Tuesday, January 8, at three P.M. After the usual routine of business, a report of the Trained Nurses' Directory was read. The report shows the directory to be in a flourishing condition. Miss Ora M. O'Connor,

who has conducted it so admirably for the past two years, was retained as registrar for the coming year.

The Pan-American Congress of Nurses, which is to meet in Buffalo in September, 1901, was next discussed, the association voting to extend to the promoters their sympathy and co-operation. Owing to the small attendance no delegate was appointed. Three new names for membership were accepted.

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#### **THE ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CLUBS AND HOMES FOR GRADUATE NURSES \***

THE subject of this paper is one of considerable complexity, upon which we can formulate no hard and fast rules, yet in general it is a topic of so much importance to the well-being of the graduate nurse that it should command our most serious consideration and call forth our best efforts.

Since the services of the graduate nurse have become a recognized necessity in the skilful and successful treatment of disease, much difficulty has been experienced by physicians and the public in ascertaining just where a nurse could be found and how to reach her in the shortest possible time.

Within the writer's memory the doctors of this city were in the habit of driving about, calling at the various houses, this time-consuming method of looking up a nurse being preferable to trusting to the uncertain messenger boy; but with the advent of the telephone all this was changed; the busy man no longer had time for a house-to-house visitation, but called up the nurse, who was fortunate enough to have a telephone. A little later this man, growing busier all the time, takes advantage of the fact that in a certain house are several nurses; if he can't get one, he may another. So the demand has grown until the club-house has become an absolute necessity from a business stand-point if from no other.

The chief difficulty in organizing a club of this kind is due largely to the fact that after leaving the school the nurses' ways become divergent, their social and business relations through the force of circumstances tending to separate them, all of which detracts from the loyalty they owe to their school and to each other; thus to gather together a band of graduate nurses, coming from different parts of the country

\* Read by Mary E. Thornton before the Third Annual Convention of the Nurses' Associated Alumnae of the United States, held at New York May 3, 4, and 5, 1900.

with different ideas and temperaments, for the purpose of propagating a successful union is a task not easily accomplished.

The history of the different associations is very nearly similar. Each one experiences in proportion to its membership an alarming deficiency of interest in this work. So great is this deficiency that to-day in our own city, with its ten or more large training-schools, there are only three club-houses that are recognized as having been founded by the nurses, for the nurses, and governed by the nurses; in other cities throughout the country a similar condition exists.

The increasing demand for graduate nurses renders it more and more imperative that there should be organization, that each association should have its own club, not merely nominal in character, but real, with settled laws and regulations as to membership and management.

In order that there should be a successful organization it is necessary at the outset that there should be first a strong feeling of fellowship, vigorous allegiance to one's school, and in general concentration of energies for mutual good. As it is expressed in the preamble of our constitution: "The object of this association shall be to promote the usefulness, honor, and interests of this school and of the nursing profession generally, to advance friendly intercourse among nurses, and to encourage unity of action in the profession."

One does not promote the usefulness, honor, and interests of her own school, still less of the nursing profession generally, when, upon receiving her diploma, she goes out among the laity, they taking her upon the good word of that school which graduated her, performs her work, be it ever so well done, receives her salary, goes home, amuses herself, and then another case: I repeat, be her work ever so well done, such an one does not promote the usefulness, honor, or interests of her school: preserve if you will, but promote—no.

There devolves upon that nurse a moral responsibility to further the interests of the school which vouches for her and gives her a standing in the professional world. Hers is a manifest duty. And how perform that duty? By organizing her club and instituting her study course is the interest furthered, for it is only by contact with our co-workers and by the interchange of ideas that progress is made, there being much truth in the charge that steadfastness of opinion, the conviction that your way is the only way, and an indifference to new ideas are the first signs of approaching age.

On this floor last year it was remarked in an off-hand manner, as if it were a matter of no moment, that "the nurse whose diploma bore the date of fifteen years back should be retired." What an outlook for the woman who spends three years in a large hospital, performing her

duties in its wards and pursuing her studies in its class-rooms! Is she only committing a certain amount of theoretical and practical knowledge sufficient to carry her through a few years? Is experience to count for nothing in this profession of ours?

There was little room for such a remark last year, and there is none this, for there are developing opportunities for post-graduate work, and there was inaugurated in the city the past winter by a co-operation of four alumnae associations on lines indicated by the Associated Alumnae what we hope may prove to be a study course for all graduate nurses throughout the country. Thus shall we be promoting the interests of the nursing profession generally, and by advancing friendly intercourse among nurses encourage unity of action in the profession.

Once organized, how shall the *esprit de corps* be maintained? We cannot imagine even an attempt at it without a trained nurse at the head, one of the body, for there are constantly arising questions in ethics the finer points of which a woman not a nurse could not possibly appreciate.

After organization numerous obligations spring up. The question arises, how shall such obligations be met? Shall the members be held directly responsible for the support and maintenance of the club, or shall such responsibility devolve upon one person? Evidently if the existence and prosperity of the club is to be assured, there must be some well-organized system of providing for its support and management. The success of such an undertaking must depend largely upon the support each member gives; hence it would seem that the welfare of the association would be best promoted by rendering the members as a body responsible.

Further than this, little need be said in regard to management, for if the organization be well founded, the question of management will adjust itself in a great measure to meet the requirements of the club. The one fact to be emphasized is that the liability for support should be vested in the members as a body, and the aid and support due from each be well-defined; thus a working union will be secured, harmony promoted, and the security of the association assured.

